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Compiled by Emma Boocock, Tom Mitchell, Kevin Till and Sergio Lara-Bercial, from the Sport Coaching and Physical Education Research Centre at Leeds Beckett University, UK

Digest contains a listing of pertinent, recent coaching and coach education articles and updates from other sources.

1. Career profiles of athlete-coach relationships: Descriptions and interpretations.

Sanstrom, E., Linner, Lukas & Stambulova, N. (2016). *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(3), 395-409.

The aim of this study was to explore athlete–coach relationships from an athletic career perspective with the objectives: (a) to create individual career profiles of athlete–coach relationships, (b) to illustrate the career profiles describing athletes’ subjective experiences of working with all the coaches involved in their careers, and (c) to summarize athletes’ views on the dynamics of athlete–coach relationships in the course of their careers. Two case studies using narrative interviews with one team and one individual sport athlete were made. The Narrative Oriented Inquiry model was used to guide the data collection, treatment, and interpretation. The results representing over 20 relationships in total are presented as individual career profiles of athlete–coach relationships followed by interpretive narratives exploring more in detail the different athlete–coach relationships throughout their careers. The authors concluded that, compared to youngsters, mature athletes expect closer relationships with their coaches, want to be involved in goal setting and decision making, and appreciate the coach’s view of them as whole persons. This provides guidance for coaches working at different levels of the performance continuum.

2. Morality in sport: The coach’s perspective

Pelaez, S., Aulls, A.W. & Bacon, S.L. (2016). *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(2), 237-249.

The authors of this study aimed to extend previous research seeking to illuminate the coach’s perspectives of morality. Participants were six coaches ($M = 46.5$; $SD = 7.6$), who had extended sport involvement, had undergone required coaching education and were coaching at the time of the interview. Case 1 was represented by three females coaching an artistic individual sport and case 2 was represented by three males coaching an interactive team sport. Results indicated that coaches found it difficult to articulate a definition of morality; though they did describe it as an ongoing learning process, context-related, that entailed reciprocity, and therefore, required permanent interchange, co-creation, negotiation and adjustment. The coaches also identified two main perspectives of morality: the moral perspective and the social perspective. The fact that coaches also found it difficult to articulate a definition of morality and to describe personal moral behaviours has pedagogical

implications to coaching education, suggests that coaches might not have the necessary background to morally guide the athletes in a confident manner.

3. Exploring Coach Behaviours, Session Contexts and Key Stakeholder Perceptions and Non-Linear Coaching Approaches in Youth Sport

Vinson, S., Brady, A., Moreland, B. & Judge, N. (2016). *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(1), 54-68.

Gaining better understanding of coaching pedagogies remains a crucial aspect of developing practice. In particular, pedagogic strategies which do not follow transmission-based, technically focused approaches have been under-investigated. This study utilised two systematic observation instruments, field notes, individual coach interviews and parent group interviews in order to investigate non-linear coaching pedagogies in three youth sport environments. The systematic observation instruments revealed a lower rate of coach behaviour than has previously been reported alongside fewer technical interventions and more questioning. The qualitative data revealed three themes; creating an environment of participant centeredness, holistic development and authentically situated learning. The systematic observation data enables direct and objective comparison with the extensive body of research concerning coach behaviours published over the last 30 years, whilst also enabling some degree of contextual and content-related exploration to be undertaken. The authors argue that future research should utilise such methodologies to investigate other sporting environments such as in elite and disability sport.

4. Experiences of Occupational Stress and Social Support In Australian Football League Senior Coaches

Knights, S., Ruddock-Hudson, M. (2016). *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(2), 162-171.

Sports coaching has evolved into a recognizable occupation that requires multiple roles and responsibilities. The Australian Football League is considered one of the highest profile sports in Australia, and as a result, Australian Football League coaches are perceived to operate in a complex and stressful environment; yet, there is no evidence to support this notion. The purpose of this research was, therefore, to examine the experiences of occupational stress and social support of Australian Football League senior coaches. A total of 12 senior Australian Football League coaches were involved in one semi-structured interview. Five themes emerged from the findings. These included: (i) pressurized workplace environments; (ii) development and improvement of others and self; (iii) accountabilities and responsibilities to others; (iv) advice, support and comfort from others and (v) stress and adversity—the ramifications. This research has contributed to the Australian sports coaching industry and is a critical step in gaining a richer and broader understanding of stress and social support among elite coaches globally.

5. Burnout and turnover intentions in Australian coaches as related to organisational support and perceived control

Kilo, R.A. & Hassmén, P. (2016). *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(2), 151-162. DOI: 10.1177/1747954116636710

This study investigated coach burnout and turnover intentions, as potentially modified by organisational support, perceived control, and coping strategies, in a sample of 406 team and individual sport coaches. Multiple regression analyses revealed that higher perceived organisational support was associated with lower coach burnout scores. Further, coaches' internal locus of control and use of approach coping strategies predicted lower levels of burnout, especially reduced sense of accomplishment. Higher perceived organisational support was also a negative predictor of coaches' turnover intentions, whereas all three burnout dimensions were strong positive predictors. The focus of coach burnout literature has traditionally been on individual factors; this study shows that organisational factors also play an important role for understanding and preventing coach burnout and turnover. The authors therefore encourage sporting organisations to consider these findings and how they can work towards protecting their coaches against burnout and from leaving the organisation

6. The role of community sports coaches in creating optimal social conditions for life skill development and transferability – a salutogenic perspective

Super, S., Verkooijen, K & Koelen, M. (2016). *Sport, Education and Society*, DOI: 10.1080/13573322.2016.1145109

Sport is widely recognised as having the potential to enhance the personal development of socially vulnerable youth, yet there is very limited knowledge on how community sports coaches can create optimal social conditions for life skill development and transferability. We adopt a salutogenic approach in order to study whether and how community sports coaches create these optimal social conditions. Based on the salutogenic framework, a thematic analysis was conducted of 15 in depth interviews with community sports coaches providing sports lessons to socially vulnerable youth. The results showed that the sports coaches aimed to create meaningful sporting experiences for youths. In order to ensure that the youths could experience moments of success, specific coaching strategies were implemented to increase the youths' comprehensibility and manageability in specific sport situations. Creating meaningful sporting experiences may help youths 'to learn to cope' – a skill that could be beneficial over their lifespan and in different societal domains.

7. The importance of indirect teaching behaviour and its educational effects in physical education.

Jung, H. & Choi, E. (2016). *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 21(2), 121-136.

Teaching behaviours and indeed coaching behaviours have been a source of interest for decades. Research has tended to focus on direct teaching behaviours which centre themselves on the benefits of effective teaching. This article provides a detailed ethnographic research project which aimed to provide a new perspective on how to research teaching behaviours in the future. Alongside this, the paper aims to provide more information around indirect teaching behaviours as opposed to direct teaching behaviours, which much of the research has largely focused on. Through conducting the project with two thirteen-year old students the researchers found that tone of voice, humour, facial expressions, dress code, touch, encouragement and care to be powerful influences on the student's social and moral development. Although teaching behaviours and the development of them are seen as trivial, this article shows that it is important to start regarding these more seriously and their impact on social development of students.

8. The traditional, the ideal and the unexplored: sport coaches' social identity constructs on film.

Jolly, S. & Lyle, J. (2016) *Sports Coaching Review*, 5(1), 41-53.

A unique article is presented here which presents a critical discourse analysis of two major films which have sports coaching as a central theme (Bend it like Beckham and Twenty Four Seven). Although the majority of films are fictional there is a consistent message portrayed within films featuring a sports coach. Films tend to represent the coach as the technician who succeeds and conquers all. However, as this paper highlights, the reality of sports coaching is just not that. The authors present a critical analysis of the two films but acknowledge throughout their biased assumptions and conceptions on sports coaching and their role. As the authors reflected, film has the potential to be a valuable teaching tool for future coaches, especially those rich in coaching moments like Twenty Four Seven. Above all, the authors conclude by stating that the films and the analysis of them has provided a new perspective on the symbolism between professional knowledge and professional identity, which begins to open up another avenue for discussions around professionalising the coaching profession.

9. An investigation of professional top-level youth football coaches' questioning practice

Cope, E., Partington, M., Cushion, C.J. & Harvey, S. (2016). *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health*, 8(4), 380–393, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2016.1157829>

To position learners as more central components in the coaching process, scholars suggested that coaches should employ a questioning approach, which may lead to the development of desirable learner outcomes (i.e. increased problem solving and decision-making skills). Studies, however, indicate that coaches rarely employ questions within their practice. When

questions are asked, these questions rarely move beyond lower order or ‘fact seeking’ enquiries. The purpose of this study was to investigate the coach questioning practices (CQPs) by recording the practices of five youth football academy coaches. Three themes presented themselves in each CQP: (1) coaches’ requirements for an immediate player response, (2) leading questions for a desired response, (3) monologist nature of coach/player interaction. This showed that the coach positioned themselves as the gatekeeper of knowledge and learners as passive recipients. The authors concur with other researchers that there is a need for further investigation in this area to better understand how the dominant coaching discourse can be challenged

10. Aligning the talent pathway: exploring the role and mechanisms of coherence in development

Webb, V., Collins, D., & Cruickshank, A. (2016). *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 34(19), 1799-1807, DOI: 10.1080/02640414.2016.1139162

The knowledge of the broader system that underpins the entire talent pathways is relatively limited. Indeed, little work has moved beyond the recognition that coherence in this system is important to consider how this may be achieved; particularly in relation to coherent coaching. This article aims to address this gap and explore principles and potential mechanisms of coherent coaching in sport organisations’ talent pathways. The authors discuss how an understanding of coach epistemology can provide a basis for integrating personal and collective coach coherence and therefore a coherent performer experience. They then consider how coherent coaching may be supported through the strategic recruitment and placement of coaches, complimentary coach education and development and the use of change agents who can set and shape the coaching milieu, facilitate cross-level communication and enable epistemology-focused reflection and evaluation.

11. To Be the Eye Within the Storm, I Am Challenged Not Stressed

Chroni, S., Abrahamsen, F. & Hemmestad, L. (2016). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 28(3), 275-273, DOI: 10.1080/10413200.2015.1113449

Via the lens of Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004) the authors explored the stress experience in seven Olympic Norway coaches. In line with previous research, elite coaching is shown as a profession which contains multiple sources of stress. This paper focuses on presenting elements that impact coaches’ stress experience. The phenomenological analysis of the semi-structured interviews identified that their expectancy to cope with the situational demands (i.e., be prepared; have a plan and stick to it) and specific defense mechanisms (i.e., positive view of stress; supportive environment) filtered the

evaluation of stressors that were thus interpreted as manageable challenges. To nurture these 2 filters, the coaches used their confidence and engaged in systematic reflection and learning. These findings of this study provide a starting point for the development of strategies to support elite coaches to better understand and cope with the stressors of their job.

12. A Cross-Sectional Analysis of Coaches' Observed Emotion-Behaviour Profiles and Adolescent Athletes' Self-Reported Developmental Outcomes

Allan, V. & Côté, J. (2016). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 28(3), 321-337

This investigation explored the relationship between coaches' emotions and adolescent athletes' psychosocial development. Participants were 9 male soccer coaches and their female athletes (N = 134, Mage = 14.54). Systematic observation was used to assess coaches' emotions during practice and athletes completed questionnaires evaluating developmental outcomes. Cluster analyses revealed 2 groups: "calm, inquisitive coaches" (n = 6) and "intense, hustle coaches" (n = 3). Athletes of calm, inquisitive coaches reported significantly more prosocial behaviours and less antisocial behaviours directed toward opponents than athletes of intense, hustle coaches. Thus, coaches' emotions during practice may be associated with young athletes' moral behaviours and should be a key element of focus for practicing coaches and researchers.

13. When Does Dispositional Gratitude Help Athletes Move Away From Experiential Avoidance? The Moderating Role of Perceived Autonomy Support From Coaches

Chen, L.H. & Wu, C. (2016). *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 28(3), 338-349, DOI: 10.1080/10413200.2016.1162221

Experiential avoidance, the attempt to avoid negative experiences (i.e., pain, setbacks, losing), can prevent athletes from reaching their goals. To mitigate this tendency, the authors of this paper offer a relational approach and propose that dispositional gratitude, a general tendency to be thankful for the role others play in our experiences and outcomes, and perceived autonomy support from coaches will have an interaction effect in mitigating experiential avoidance. Time-lagged data from 140 athletes were analysed. Dispositional gratitude and perceived coach autonomy support had a significant interaction effect on predicting experiential avoidance. Those high in dispositional gratitude decreased their experiential avoidance over time when perceived coach autonomy support was also high. This paper opens a new line of research and practical implications for coaches in supporting athletes cope with the inevitable unpleasant experiences that characterise elite sport.

14. Recovery–stress imbalance in Australian Football League coaches: A pilot longitudinal study

Kellmann, M., Altfeld, S. & Mallett, C.J. (2016). *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 14:3, 240-249, DOI: 10.1080/1612197X.2015.1020662

This paper focuses on the potential for coaching employment in high-performance sport to create significant stress for coaches. Moreover, the authors argue that, as the season progresses, the accumulation of stress and the decreased ability to engage in recovery means are likely to cause a negative recovery–stress balance in coaches. Participants of this study were six male full-time and paid coaches working for a professional Australian Football League (AFL) team. The coaches completed the general Recovery-Stress Questionnaire at eight time points during pre-season and throughout the competitive season. The data indicating stress levels did not increase over the competitive season but decreases in recovery scores were assessed. A two-week vacation had a positive influence on recovery for these coaches but it was short lived. There was a fluctuation of scores over the season. The head coach had a different recovery–stress profile compared with the assistant coaches. The study highlights the importance of recovery in managing recovery–stress balance in the challenging work environments of coaches. Due to conditions in the sport setting, individuals may not always be able to reduce their stress levels, and therefore improved recovery is required to deal with the demands of occupational stress.

15. Real-World Experiences of the Coaching Pathos: Orchestration of NCAA Division I Sport

Readdy, T., Zakrajsek, R. & Raabe, J. (2016). *The Sport Psychologist*, 30, 167-178,

In this paper, the authors adopt a perspective of sport coaching marked by a pathos created by limited control and limited awareness, contradictory beliefs, and novelty. From this viewpoint, coaches can still enhance the likelihood of optimal outcomes through orchestration, a process described as the unobtrusive, flexible actions that enhance athletes' ability to work toward competitive goals (Jones & Wallace, 2005). This research sought to create a detailed understanding of pathos and orchestration in collegiate coaching. Participants were 10 head coaches from National Collegiate Athletic Association universities. Analysis of semi-structured interviews produced four themes: (a) true control is limited but attempted control is extensive, (b) orchestration strategies are varied in context and method, (c) relationships enhance the effectiveness of the orchestration process, and (d) planning the next step allows for relative stability in the pathos. This paper expands our understanding of pathos and orchestration in coaching, suggesting the concepts have promise in educating coaches about

sources of adversity and the means to mitigate them.

16. The Effect of Mindfulness Training on Attention and Performance in National-Level Swimmers: An Exploratory Investigation

Mardon, N., Richards, H. & Martindale, A. (2016). *The Sport Psychologist*, 30, 131-140

In this quasi-experimental intervention study, the authors investigated the impact of mindfulness training on attention and performance in swimmers. Following an 8-week intervention with six national-level university swimmers (M = 20 years), single case analysis of pre- and post- measurements for three of six participants showed large improvements in mindfulness and attention efficiency. Two participants showed a small increase in one of mindfulness or attention efficiency, and one showed no changes. Four participants improved performance times compared with season-best, and five participants improved self-rated performance. Athletes and coach positively evaluated mindfulness training. This study, with strong ecological validity, shows improvements in mindfulness, attention, and performance, consistent with theory that proposes attention as a mechanism for mindfulness based performance changes. Mindfulness training is thus proposed by the authors as a potentially effective and practical intervention to facilitate performance improvement in athletes.

17. National Strength and Conditioning Association position statement on long-term athletic development

Lloyd, R.S., Cronin, J.B., Faigenbaum, A.D., Haff, G.G., Howard, R., Kraemer, W.J., Micheli, L.J., Myer, G.D., and Oliver, J.L. (2016). *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* 30(6), 1491–1509.

The long-term athletic development of children and adolescents has received a growing interest in research and practice for physical activity, health and sporting performance purposes. To promote long term athletic development appropriate exercise prescription is crucial to physically develop youths and also minimise injury risk so they can tolerate the rigours of sport and physical activity. In view of this, the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) tasked an authorship team to develop a position statement for long-term athletic development of youth athletes regardless of age, ability and aspiration. The overarching principle pervading the ten pillars including in the developed statement, is the recommendation that all youths engaged in regular physical activity are viewed as 'athletes' and provided the opportunity to enhance physical athletic capacities in a holistic, individualised and appropriate manner. The challenge is implementing these strategies within sports and physical activity practices across a range of ages, abilities and aspirations.

